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RUEHAK/USDAO ANKARA TU PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 001417

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [PARM](#) [IZ](#) [SY](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: TURKISH MFA DETAILS IRANIAN ARMS FOUND ON TRAIN;
GOT TAKES STEPS TO STOP FUTURE SHIPMENTS

REF: A. ANKARA 01347

[1](#)B. TD-314/42628-07

[1](#)C. IIR 6 898 0352 07

Classified By: DCM Nancy McEldowney for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: MFA South Asia Department Director Ahmet Murat Yoruk listed for us on June 6 the arms recovered from a Turkish freight train derailed in a PKK terrorist attack in eastern Turkey May 25, including mortar shells, RPG barrels, rifle rounds, and smoke bombs. Yoruk said the MFA has demanded official explanations from Iran and Syria. In response to this incident, Turkish Customs has stepped up its surveillance of road and rail crossings from Iran and hopes to soon have new x-ray equipment in place on the border. We strongly urged the MFA to report the find to the UN, stressed the urgency for GOT implementation of UNSCR 1747, offered assistance in identifying the weapons, and noted US interest in providing more assistance to Turkish Customs. Ambassador also underscored US concern about the incident, and the need to report to the UN with Deputy Under Secretary for Middle East and South Asia Feridun Sinirlioglu on June 5. End Summary

[1](#)2. (C) The weapons were hidden in two containers of fiberglass roofing material, Yoruk said, which according to the bill of lading, were shipped from the Behnam Shahriyari Trading Company in Tehran and consigned to the Al Joori Trading Company in Damascus. The containers entered Turkey from Iran at the Kapikoy rail crossing in Van Province. Several cars of the Turkish State Railways freight train carrying the containers were derailed in the attack, believed carried out by the PKK through a remotely detonated IED in the Genc District of Bingol Province. Yoruk noted that there had been two prior PKK attacks on trains in Bingol Province using similar methods.

[1](#)3. (C) According to the MFA, Turkish Jandarma recovered from the train: 393 boxes of 81 mm mortar shells (1,572 rounds); 75 boxes of 120 mm mortar shells (150 rounds); 275 "multi-barreled RPG barrels;" 115 boxes of 7.62 mm sniper rifle cartridges (115,000 rounds); and 64 boxes containing 1,920 "smoke bombs."

[1](#)4. (C) Yoruk told us that MFA U/S Ertugrul Apakan called in the Iranian charge on May 28 to issue a strongly-worded protest and to demand an official explanation. The MFA

reminded the Iranian Embassy June 5 that it was waiting for an official response, but had not received any statement as of June 6. Yoruk confided that he did not expect any official Iranian admission of complicity and quoted official press reports from Tehran in which Supreme National Security Council Secretary Ali Larijani denied Iranian government involvement in the shipment. The MFA had also instructed its embassy in Damascus to seek an explanation and comments from the SARG, Yoruk said, but had not yet received a reply.

15. (C) As a result of this incident, Yoruk said that Turkish Customs has stepped up its surveillance of vehicles and train cargo entering Turkey from Iran. The number of manual inspections of containers and trucks has been increased, and Customs is expecting new x-ray equipment to be in place at some border checkpoints soon to aid in detection of illicit cargo. Separately, Turkish Customs informed us that it has tightened the targeting matrix for shipments departing Iran and has also increased the number of random searches that are now being conducted on this border.

16. (C) Noting that the GOT had requested two IL-76 cargo flights transiting Turkey from Syria to Iran to land in Dyabakir for inspections on May 30 and May 31, Yoruk said GOT plans to continue to request transiting aircraft to land for inspection on a case-by-case basis. He also told us that documents on board a freight train which was inspected by Turkish authorities in August 2006 contained the name of the Tehran-based Behnam Shariyari Trading Company, although, Yoruk noted, no weapons or illicit cargo were found on board the train.

17. (C) In response, we strongly urged that Turkey report the

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weapons find to the appropriate UN committee. We used the opportunity to again underscore the urgency of GOT implementation of UNSCR 1747, a point Ambassador emphasized with Under Secretary Sinirlioglu June 5. We offered to provide assistance in identifying the origin of the weapons. We also noted our interest in providing further assistance to Turkish Customs upon entry into force of the Non-proliferation Cooperation (AKA EXBIS) Agreement, including mobile x-ray and detection equipment and upgrades to monitors and communications equipment at all border locations.

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